

Atty. Docket No.: PALM.-0869

Patent 10/006,525

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending in the application.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

A. Claims 1, 2, 9, 12, 13, 22-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Clapper (U.S. Patent No. 6,704,007).

Applicant concedes that Clapper teaches an electronic device comprising of a housing having a plurality of housing segments, a plurality of modules individually encased in the housing segments, and a sensor to detect an orientation of the electronic device. But Clapper does not teach a selection mechanism that “automatically select[s] at least one, *but not all*, of the plurality of modules *to be active*, based on the detected orientation of the electronic device.” In making the rejection, the Office Action makes reference to Column 3, lines 29-43. This section of Clapper recites that a software application may be launched depending on the orientation of the device.

The Examiner correctly notes that the keyboard and display of Clapper are separately housed. To this extent, these two elements are viewed in the Office Action as modules. But the portion of Clapper that is cited as teaching the selection mechanism actually teaches that different applications can be launched based on a detected orientation of the electronic device. In Clapper, both the keyboard and display are active, regardless of orientation, and what is affected by orientation is application selection, display configuration and possibly keyboard configuration. As such, the feature of a selection mechanism selecting a module to be active is missing from Clapper.

If the Examiner’s position is to call the keyboard and display of Clapper “modules”, then both modules in Clapper are active and the orientation information is used for reasons other than selecting a module to be active. No other component in Clapper can be considered a module that is separately housed, as required by the claims. Thus, in either case, the limitations of Claim 1 are not taught by Clapper.

In general, Applicant’s invention is directed to an electronic device that contains modules that are independently usable. Thus, when one module is active, the other module

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need not be active. This is different than what is taught in the cited references, and as such, the specific claim limitations are not disclosed by Clapper or by other references on record.

With regard to Applicant's Claim 12, there is the added feature of the selection mechanism "maintaining one or more non-selected modules in an inactive state in response to the detected orientation." Applicant notes that the specification of the present applications makes clear what is meant by inactive: "As used herein, the term 'inactive' means a state where user-interface features are not actuatable. An inactive state may correspond to a low-power state, such as a sleep-mode, where the device has to be actuated to be fully operational." [Page 6, second paragraph] There is no teaching in Clapper that describes this feature. The portion of Clapper cited in the Office Action is column 3, line 3-27. But that section of Clapper describes display configurations to ameliorate contrast reversals, assignments, and key assignments of the keyboard. There is no teaching of selecting one module having its own housing to be active, and maintaining a non-selected module in an inactive state.

Claim 22 has been amended to recite that one of the first module or second module is made active in response to a detected orientation. For reasons stated above, this claim is distinguishable from Clapper.

Claims 23-25 depend from Claim 26. Applicant submits for reasons stated above, the claims are allowable.

Claims 26-30 are based on a selection mechanism that selects one of a first or second set of user-interface features. Applicant submits that Clapper teaches how the keyboard or display can be configured, but both of those features are selected regardless of orientation. As with other claims, the orientation causes the selection of one of the first or second set of user-interface features to be active.

Claim 30 teaches a specific orientation that is not taught in Clapper or the cited references.

B. Claim 14-21 stand rejected as being anticipated by Baron et al. (US Pub No. 2003/0038779).

Applicant respectfully submits that Baron is distinguishable from this set of claims. Independent claim 14 recites the step of "selecting a first module from a plurality of modules to be operational based on the detected orientation of the electronic device."

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Baron does not teach the use of multiple modules, just one device having multiple modes or mode variables. As stated in the specification, a module is "a component having a combination of logic and one or more user-interface features." Absent multiple modules, the step of "selecting" based on orientation information is clearly missing.

Applicant submits that dependent claims 15-21 are distinguishable, for reasons such as stated above.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 3-8, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Baron and Ijas (US Publication No. 2002/0044425). Applicant requests reconsideration of this rejection, in view of the amendments to the claims and the remarks made herein.

CONCLUSION

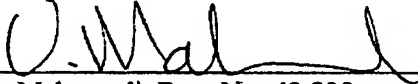
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-30 are in condition for allowance. The allowance of the claims is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned if there are any issues that remain to be resolved prior to allowance of the claims.

AUTHORIZATION TO CHARGE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

Please charge deposit account 501914 for any underpayments in connection with this Office Action response.

Respectfully submitted,
Shemwell Gregory & Courtney LLP

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Van Mahamedi, Reg. No. 42,828
Tel. 408-551-6632

Shemwell Gregory & Courtney LLP
4880 Stevens Creek Blvd., Suite 201
San Jose CA 95129